

turn around and invest at least the initial of those savings back into the transition. We did a good job of adding \$4 billion to child care for people moving from welfare to work. But we still may not have enough child care to do the job. And we know that is a huge barrier. You cannot ask people to hurt their kids when they go to work. And a lot of folks entering these entry-level jobs don't make much money. Now, we can carry them over with Medicaid health insurance for their kids for a while. They've got to have the child care.

This bill gives you a lot of flexibility, and now you have to design this program. I would just implore you to really get down to brass tacks, get the facts: How many people does North Carolina have to move from welfare into jobs in 4 years? How many is that per county? How many is that per community? What are the tools we have? Who have we asked to do the job?

I believe that the private sector is anxious to be asked to participate in this. I believe they want to end the permanent under class in America and help people move into the thriving, growing middle class. But we have to do it in an organized, disciplined way, State by State. We're going to do our part, but we need you to do yours.

Finally, let me say that it is obvious from looking at education that we have to have a new partnership in America. Washington can lead the way, but the work has to be done by all Americans. North Carolina has led the way for a long time.

I was smiling today when I got up and I thought about coming down here, and I thought about the first time I was ever in a meeting with Governor Hunt and Governor Riley—18 years ago—we were all much younger then. And we had this idea that all the Southern States would reach the national average in per capita income and have all these great opportunities for our people if only we could have an education system that was as good as anyplace in the country and it would reach everybody, without regard to race or income.

And ironically, the mission that many of us who are southerners have carried for 20 or 30 years in our hearts, is now the mission of America in a global society dominated by

information and technology. And it is within our reach, literally, to give every single child in America the greatest future in human history, if we create the conditions in which we can flourish—that's partly our job, through national defense and meeting the security challenges and providing a good economy—but also having the tools.

We cannot guarantee the future for any child, but we can give every child the tools to make the most of his or her own life. That is now America's mission. It is a mission this State has pursued for a long time. If you will lead the way, America's best days are still ahead.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:09 a.m. in the House of Representatives Chamber. In his remarks, he referred to Gov. James B. Hunt, Jr., and Lt. Gov. Dennis Wicker of North Carolina; Harold Brubaker, speaker, North Carolina House of Delegates; Marc Basnight, president pro tempore, North Carolina State Senate; Mayor Tom Fetzner of Raleigh; and Dean Smith, men's basketball coach, University of North Carolina.

Statement Announcing the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning

March 13, 1997

Today Hillary and I are pleased to announce that on April 17, 1997, we will host the White House Conference on Early Childhood Development and Learning: What New Research on the Brain Tells Us About Our Youngest Children. The conference, which will take place at the White House, will spotlight exciting new findings about how our children develop, and explore how we can make the most of this information to give our children what they need to thrive.

We hope that this one-day conference will make the latest scientific research, nearly all supported by the Federal Government, more accessible and understandable to America's families. The research clearly indicates the importance of children's first few years to their later success in school and in life. This conference is a continuation of my adminis-

tration's commitment to children, and in particular, it follows Hillary's work over the years on issues relating to early childhood development.

The conference will examine how we can use this new research in practical ways—to be better parents, more informed caregivers, and more responsive members of our communities. It will also explore how this information can be used by all members of our society—from corporate executives to pediatricians, from ministers to elected officials—to help strengthen America's families.

Parents desperately want to do right by their children, and we all have a role to play in making sure they have the tools they need to do the best job they can. We believe this conference can make a valuable contribution.

Statement on House of Representatives Action on Narcotics Certification for Mexico

March 13, 1997

Today's vote by the House of Representatives on Mexico is the wrong way to continue and deepen the unprecedented cooperation we are getting from Mexico in the war on drugs and the wrong way to protect the interests of the American people.

We all seek the same goal: to keep drugs out of America's neighborhoods and away from our children. Accomplishing that goal requires that we work closely with nations that share our objective of halting the flow of illegal narcotics, especially with the one country in the hemisphere whose 2,000 mile border with the United States makes it a ready target of the traffickers seeking to smuggle their contraband into the United States.

I certified Mexico because in the last year, we have achieved an unprecedented level of cooperation on counternarcotics, because Mexico has taken concrete steps on its own to fight drug trafficking, and because certification is the best way to make sure that Mexico's cooperation and antidrug efforts grow even stronger.

Under President Zedillo's leadership, Mexico broke new ground by extraditing two of its citizens to the United States and expel-

ling drug kingpin Juan Garcia Abrego, who is now behind bars in an American prison for life. Our military cooperation has improved dramatically as we have expanded antidrug training and assistance on drug interdiction.

Moreover, Mexico has taken the initiative by itself: Drug seizures, arrests, crop eradication, and the destruction of drug labs and runaways in Mexico have all increased. New laws to combat organized crime and money laundering have been enacted. And the Zedillo administration immediately arrested and prosecuted its drug czar when they discovered he had been corrupted by a major drug ring.

President Zedillo recognizes the enormity of the problem Mexico faces, and he has been courageous in carrying this battle forward. He deserves our support, not a vote of "no confidence" that will only make it more difficult for him to work with us and defeat the scourge of drugs.

I will continue to work with Congress to ensure that legislation that would undermine progress we have made with Mexico does not become law.

Memorandum on National Testing in Defense Department Schools

March 13, 1997

Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense

Subject: Participation of Department of Defense Dependents Schools and Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools in National Testing

The Department of Defense Dependents Schools overseas and the Domestic Dependent Elementary and Secondary Schools here at home play an important role in enhancing the quality of life and overall readiness of the Armed Forces of the United States. They provide military families deployed overseas and within the United States with outstanding educational opportunities, and they play a vital role in preparing the children of military and civilian personnel in the Armed Forces for the future.

Students in these schools deserve the best we can offer, starting with the highest expectations and most challenging academic stand-